



Visiting Scholar Speaker Series

Christopher Fettweis
Mershon Center

**"Evaluating IR's Crystal Balls:
How Predictions of the Future Have
Withstood Fourteen Years of Unipolarity"**

The fall of the Berlin Wall inspired a variety of scholars to speculate about why the Cold War came to such an abrupt and shocking end, why no school of thought anticipated its demise, and what the event meant for international relations theory. A set of articles simultaneously emerged purporting to identify the most salient aspects of the new system, structural and otherwise, and to anticipate the direction in which it was heading. This paper begins a re-examination of some of those predictions, using the evidence that has accumulated over the decade and a half since the collapse of bipolarity to evaluate how early visions of the post-Cold War international system matched events that followed. In all the main areas of contention between neorealist and constructivist predictions – over balancing, the rise of multipolarity, and conflict – constructivism, with its emphasis on the role of ideas and norms in state behavior, has proven more prescient.

Tuesday, November 4, 2003
12:00 p.m. *
Mershon Center
Room 120



Christopher Fettweis (Ph.D., Maryland) is a post-doctoral fellow at the Mershon Center. His current research concentrates on the development of post-cold war US foreign policy, especially toward Central Asia and the Caucasus. This project is building on a research foundation which won second place in the International Studies Association's "Alexander George Graduate Student Paper Competition," 2001. Fettweis is the author of several articles on international relations, geopolitics, US foreign policy and history, including "Revisiting Angell and Mackinder: The Obsolescence of Great Power Geopolitics," (*Comparative Strategy*, April 2003), "War as Catalyst" (*The Journal of Genocide Research*, June 2003), "Sir Halford Mackinder, Geopolitics, and Policymaking in the 21st Century" (*Parameters*, Summer 2000), and "The CINCs in the Foreign Policy Process," in Reveron (ed.), *America's Viceroy: The Military and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, forthcoming). Before coming to OSU, Fettweis taught US foreign policy and international relations at the US Naval Academy, George Washington University, and the University of Maryland, College Park.

*R.S.V.P. to [Ann Powers](#) if you plan to attend this event.